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ABSTRACT

This is a fourth-grade teaching unit on the Plains Indians of North America. It is composed of a content outline, statement of unit goals, unit behavioral objectives, initiating activities, developmental activities, closing activities, unit evaluation plan, and a bibliography. The content outline shows that the unit covers the Plains Indian's government, family structures, social order, education, recreation, art, music, ceremonies and communication. Knowledge and skill goals address the above content, and attitudinal goals seek to have the students develop a sense of respect for the lifestyle and music of the Plains Indians. Activities include suggestions for guest speakers, filmstrips, song and dance learning, movies, role playing, drawing, ceramics, carving, games, story writing, research projects, listening to records, making musical instruments, constructing mobiles, picture writing, experimenting with sound travel, research papers, making dioramas, and visiting the museum. The unit evaluation parallels the goals and objectives and draws heavily on observing performances and collecting materials made during the unit activities. The 21-item bibliography includes 19 books, 1 filmstrip, 6 movies, and 2 records. (JDH)

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PLAINS INDIANS OF NORTH AMERICA

Beth Parker
Grade Level: fourth
April 21, 1986

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CONTENT OUTLINE

I. Government and Occupation/Family Structure
   A. Attitude of each member of a family unit
   B. Different duties - who did what?
      1. farming
      2. hunting
      3. firebuilding
      4. breaking down tepees for transport
   C. Social order - tribal laws
      1. council
      2. chief
      3. braves
      4. peace chief
      5. war chief

II. Education and Recreation/Games
   A. Comparison of Indian education and our education now
   B. Subjects learned - same as ours today?
   C. Games played by children (Indian)

III. Music/Art/Ceremonies
   A. Instruments
      1. same as ours?
      2. what materials were they made of?
      3. Do we have similar sounding instruments?
   B. Songs
      1. Do the songs tell a story or give a message?
      2. Are they similar or different to our music today? in what ways?

IV. Communication
   A. Smoke signals
      1. What was the purpose?
      2. What could be analagous to the smoke signal at the present time? --- telephone, letters mailed (tell why)
   B. Picture writing
      1. transmit messages---tells a story throughout time
      2. form of artwork
   C. Sound travel
      1. ground vibrations

I. Unit Topic: Plains Indians of North America

II. Unit Goals

A. Knowledge Goals

1. Learning about the ruling government and the family structure with respect to occupations of the Plains Indians (i.e. tribal laws, who does what...).
2. Learning about the Plains Indians education and recreation (comparisons to ours, subjects, games).
3. Learning about the Plains Indians style of music, art and ceremonies (instruments, songs).
4. Learning about communication of a different culture (smoke signals, picture writing, sounds).

B. Skill Goals

1. Students will be able to refer to and describe the social order and responsibilities within the tribe.
2. Students will be able to play games and sing Indian songs.
3. Students will be able to perform an Indian dance.
4. Students will be able to communicate messages by means of picture writing and sound travel.

C. Attitude Goals

1. Students will develop a respect for the lifestyle of the Plains Indians with respect to their forms of government and family structure/responsibilities, and realize how it was effective for them.
2. Students will develop an appreciation and understanding of the music and of the Plains Indians culture, and its importance in their lives.

III. Unit Behavioral Objectives

A. Knowledge and Informational Objectives

KG 1 1. Students will be able to match specific jobs with the members in the Indian tribe responsible for doing that job.

KG 1 2. Students will be able to solve make-believe problems that might be encountered in an Indian society.

KG 1 3. Students will learn the requirements necessary for leadership within a tribe.

KG 2 4. Students will be able to compare and contrast the Indian education to ours and subjects that were different.

KG 3 5. Students will listen to Indian music and participate in a discussion of the sounds and their differences.

KG 3 6. Understanding the concepts of the presence of good and evil spirits in the Plains Indians culture, students will illustrate events and rituals that went into preparing for a ceremony.

KG 4 7. Students will experience and/or discuss the different methods of communication.

KG 4 8. Students will experience sound travel communication in the Plains Indians culture without vocalizing a sound.

B. Skill Objectives

SG 1 1. Students will be able to role play different tribal members or positions in order to develop solutions to hypothetical problems.

SG 2 2. Students will research in the library forms of Indian recreation and give a presentation.

SG 2 3. By writing a book about the duties of each member of their family and also writing a book about the duties of different members of a Plains Indian family, each student will recognize the differences among our two cultures.

SG 3 4. Students will sing the song Athapascan, Bear-Raven Song while acting out a skit which expresses an event or story.

SG3 5. Students will discriminate different instruments being used while listening to a record of Indain music.

SG 4 6. Students will correctly transmit a message using already predetermined signs, shapes and codes through picture writing in a large box of wet sand.

SG 4 7. Knowing that different sounds with respect to intensity, timbre, pitch (highness and lowness), students will discriminate the sounds from each other and be able to distinguish what message is being communicated.

C. Attitude Objectives

AG 1 1. By participating in a role playing activity, the students will gain a respect for the governing bodies of the Plains Indians tribes.

AG 1 2. By playing different parts/positions in an Indian family, students will gain greater admiration for the effectiveness of the hierarchial social order found in the Plains Indians society.

AG 2 3. Students will demonstrate their appreciation of Indian music and dance by taking part in two different Indian dances (Rabbit Dance & Athapascan dance).

IV. Initiating Activities

KO 1,3,4 SO 1 A. A guest speaker will come from the Indian Museum at Eagle Creek State Park and bring some artifacts (instruments, items of clothing, pieces of handiwork--artwork, etc...) and give a good introduction to the daily lifestyle of the Plains Indians with respect to their tribal governing body and laws, family structure, and games and ceremonies.

KO 1,3,4 B. Students will view the filmstrip, "The Crooked Peak of Heaven" and participate in a class discussion.

SO 4 AO 3 C. Students will learn the song, Athapascan, Bear-Raven Song, which is an Indian song and dance that tells a story of a hunter who kills a mother bear, then is hunted himself by the father bear and finally killed. The song, which has no "words" but only syllable sounds, will be appropriately accompanied by specific instruments (to help describe a specific feeling or emotion of the event). Students will take turns playing different "characters" (mother bear, father bear, baby bear, hunter, raven) and playing instruments.

KO 2,4 D. Any one of the following movies would be very appropriate to be used as a general introduction to the Plains Indians: "American Indian Speaks", "People of the Buffalo", "The Forgotten American", "The Sun Daggers".

V. Developmental Activities

KO 2 SO 1 AO 2 A. Role Playing: Give a brief discussion. The Plains Indians had no laws as we do today. Each person had a right to express his opinion. In time of peace, a special council gave help and advice in solving tribal problems. The members of this council were the elder, influential men whose experience and wisdom were greatly respected. One member became a peace chief because he was thought to be the wisest

of all. He did not have power; he only gave advice. The war chief was a younger brave, chosen because he fought courageously in many battles. The young warriors policed the tribe and maintained order, when necessary. After presenting the above material, give a small group of students one of the following problems to solve. Have the small groups take turns role-playing the solutions in front of the whole class.

1. Gray-Wolf thinks Running Bear stole his horse. What should he do?
2. Big Cloud becomes rowdy during a tribal war dance. How can he be calmed down?
3. Several young braves are planning to steal horses from a different tribe. How will the tribe react to their plans?

AO 2 B. Hierarchial Order: Give a brief discussion of the hierarchial order or tribal social order with respect to the different chiefs and councils (peace chief, war chief, tribal chief), medicine men, braves, warriors, and all of the women and children. Have the students, using good drawing paper, develop a tribal hierarchial order by drawing and labelling the different representatives accordingly.

KO 1 C. Guess Whose Job: In order for a tribe to work efficiently, everyone has to do his/her job. Ask the students if any of them have jobs at home. Go through the prepared "job" flashcards and have the students decide if the job is for a man, woman or child. Do not make corrections until the students have had time to research some books for answers. The following are some flashcard ideas: <u>hunt buffalo</u>, make blankets, make moccasins, scrape hair from buffalo skins, make tepees, cook, care for children, make clothes, <u>fight other tribes</u>, <u>hunting</u> (in general) farming, planting corn, building the fires, carrying the water, taking down and moving the tepees. (Note--the underlined jobs were done by the men exclusively.)

KO 1 D. Ceramics: Each student, with a large piece of clay, will make a pot similar to those made by the Indian women for use when cooking. It will be painted and then baked.

KO 3
AO 1

F. Role Playing: Each student will be a member of one of three tribes in the classroom. They will elect their own chiefs, medicine men, braves, etc... and form their own governing bodies.

AO 2

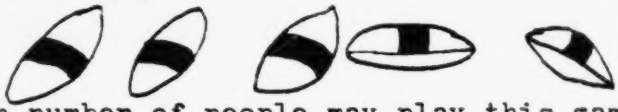
F. Carving: Each student will carve on a bar of soap, arrowheads used on spears for hunting and fighting.

SO 3

G. Book Making: Each student will make their own booklet describing the chores and duties of each member of an Indian family--drawing pictures, then writing a short excerpt for each one. The next day, each student will make another booklet describing the chores and duties of each member of their own family. These booklets will be used as comparison guides to show the differences between our two cultures.

KO 4

H. Bowl Game: This game was played by nearly every tribe in the country. The Plains Indians used a wooden bowl for the game. To make the game, one needs a small wooden salad bowl or woven basket, six peach or plum pits, a small bottle or India ink, and a pen point and holder. Wash and dry the pits. With the pen and ink, draw a broad line across one side of each stone.



Any even number of people may play this game, even as few as two. Drop the six pits into the bowl. Hold the bowl in one hand and flip the pits up into the air, catching them again in the air. Score by counting the number of pits that land with the marked side up. Each one counts 1 point. After scoring your turn, pass the bowl/basket to your opponent. Each player keeps his own score with tooth picks. The winner is the one having the most tooth picks after twenty tosses. If as many as six players are playing, divide up into teams.

SO 2

I. Write a Story: Each student will write a story telling a day in the life of an Indian family and illustrate it on posterboard, to be displayed along the walls of the room.

SO 2

J. Research Project: The students will look through the available books to find games the Indians enjoyed playing.

When a game is found, the student should do one of the following; either write rules for the game or write a report or paragraph about the game (age intended, materials, possible history...).

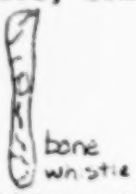
K. Listen to a Record: Listen to a record of American Indian music. To promote discussion, ask:

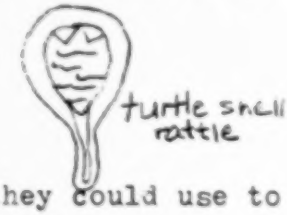
KO 5
SO 5

1. Does the music sound different from what you hear on the radio?
2. What kind of instruments do you hear?
3. What kind of beat does the music have?
4. Why do you think Indians frequently had war dances?

L. Musical Instruments: The musical instruments of the Plains Indians were drums of various sizes and shapes, flutes, bone whistles, and rattles, sometimes made of turtle shells.

SO 5
AO 3





Have students think of things that they could use to make some instruments; also, see if some instruments could be borrowed---now we are ready for an Indian dance!

M. Rabbit Dance: Help the students learn an authentic Indian dance. Arrange the dancers in pairs. Place their arms around each other's waists. Couples should be arranged in a compact column. Move around 'til you are moving in a ring. The step: 1.) jump back on left foot, 2.) step back on right foot, 3.) step back on left foot, 4.) step forward on right foot. The drumming is in 4-beat time, accentuated on the first beat. (Note: After 36 counts you can add a 4 count trot. To do this, each couple crouches down a little, trots forward with long gliding steps, bringing the feet down flat. Having made the 4 steps, they rise errect and continue as before.)

KO 6
AO 3

N. Mobile-Making: Have the children consider all aspects of Indian life; such as tepees, arrowheads (weapons) Indian chiefs, horses, etc... and have them make illustrations, all approximately the same size, to then be colored and cut

KO 1

out and made into mobiles to be hung over their desks. This is to represent the students idea of a day in the life of a Plains Indian.

O. Picture Writing: Students will divide into groups of four or five. Using already predetermined signs, shapes and codes, each child will draw a representation of an idea using picture writing in a large box of wet sand. Each student will explain his/her idea to the group.

KO 7
SO 6

P. Sound Travel: When the Indians wasnted to hear sounds far off, they would put their ears to the ground and listen. The students will learn that sound travels through solid objects. Knowing that different sounds with respect to intensity, timbre, pitch (highness and lowness), discrimination among the sounds from each other will be made. A message will be communicated. The students will rest their heads on their desks. They will stretch their arms and scratch the other end of the desk with their fingernails. They will hear the sould of scratching the desk top. Next, the students will pair up. While one has his ear to the floor, the other will stomp out a code on the floor. Explain that this activity is analogous to Indians putting their ear to the ground to detect hoof beats of approaching horses.

KO 8
SO 7

Q. Smoke Signals: The Indians knew that smoke and heat rises. The students will prove this by blowing up a balloon and holding it over a heater/radiator, or by holding tissue pap er over the radiator.

KO 7

VI. Closing Activities

A. Have each student, now after learning about the Plains Indians, do library research on another group of Indians, and write a good paper comparing and contrasting these two groups of Indians.

KO 1

B. Have each child make his own shoe box diorama depicting any kind of Indian scene he wishes. The student should make it fairly detailed and painted nicely (ex: war dance, many chiefs, a tepee and family, on a buffalo hunt, etc...).

KO 1

C. The students will have an opportunity to go on a field trip to the Indianapolis Children's Museum to view the extensive American Indian section. Afterwards, they will go outside

KO 1,3
AO 2

and sit on blankets with their sack lunches to try to emulate the style of the Indians.

VII. Evaluation

This unit has been developed around many activities for the children to perform to show their knowledge, understanding, and/or ability at different concepts and tasks. In addition, there are opportunities for participation in class discussions. This allows children either the opportunity to ask questions about misunderstandings or things they just don't know; or, to synthesize and expand upon already known facts or ideas. Due to the fact that my philosophy of teaching is one of a wholistic approach, it is therefore reasonable to assume that a great deal of record keeping on my part will be required to keep track of each child's progress and accomplishments. I will therefore maintain an individual file folder for each child in a filing cabinet. Inside there will be kept daily records and notes of what was accomplished in the way of activities, how much if any class discussion participation, and any other significantly related input that would show cognitive application of materials learned concerning the topic at hand. This kind of information would represent 15% of the total grade. The following is a list of the evaluative data upon which the child's final grade for the unit would be dependant upon:

KO 5,7 SO 4,7	15%	A. daily accomplishm'ts & class participat'n - discuss.
KO 2,3 SO 1 AO 1,2	40%	B. role-playing activities
KO 6 SO 5 AO 3	23%	C. all music and dance activities
SO 3	15%	D. personal comparison booklets
KO 7,8 SO 6,7	7%	E. picture writing-communication activity

** Notation: KG# - Knowleage goal number
SG# - skill goal number
AG# - attitude goal number

KO# - Knowleage objective number
SO# - skill objective number
AO# - attitude objective number

Bibliographies

Books:

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Pine, Tillie S. The Indians Knew. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1957.

Pluckrose, Henry. Plains Indians. New York: Gloucester Press, 1980.

Rachlis, Eugene. Indians of the Plains. New York: American Heritage Publishing Company, 1960.

Sheppard, Sally. Indians of the Plains. New York: Franklin Watts, Inc., 1976.

Filmstrip:

1. "The Crooked Peak Of Heaven"

Movies:

1. "American Indian Speaks"
2. "My Hands Are the Tools of My Soul"
3. "People of the Buffalo"
4. "The Forgotten American"
5. "The Longest War"
6. "The Sun Daggers"

Records:

1. "American Indian Ceremonial and War Dances." California: Everst Records.
2. "American Indian Dances." New York: Folkways Records, 1958.